

# AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

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## CULTURAL RESOURCES

### BACKGROUND

New Orleans's unique history and culture led to the development of New Orleans jazz. The city was founded by the French (1718), ceded to Spain (1763), returned to France (1803), and almost immediately sold to the United States in the Louisiana Purchase. A rich amalgam of cultures formed in this city. The Creole culture was Catholic and both French- and Spanish-speaking. The American culture was Protestant and English-speaking. During the colonial period, enslaved West Africans were brought to the city so that at the beginning of the period of American dominion, nearly 50% of the city's population was of varied African descent, both free and enslaved.

After the Louisiana Purchase, English-speaking Anglo- and African-Americans moved into New Orleans. The newcomers began settling upriver from Canal Street and away from the already populated Vieux Carré. These settlements extended the city boundaries and created the "uptown" American sector.

In the early 19th century various African and African-American elements routinely began to be incorporated into the musical culture of the city and accepted as an integral part of the culture. Likewise, many African-Americans, especially the educated free people of color, participated in musical activities considered European in origin, thereby blurring many of the cultural differences that existed in other southern cities.

Also, during the 19th century German and Irish immigrants came to the city in greater numbers. The more affluent settled in and adjacent to the central business district, while the less prosperous settled in working class areas along both upriver (Irish Channel) and downriver (Lower Marigny and Bywater) portions of New Orleans.

After the Civil War, and especially at the turn of the century, large numbers of Italians and other southern European immigrants arrived in New Orleans and moved into the lower Vieux Carré. Many of these immigrants also settled in the

upriver and downriver working-class neighborhoods and some newer ones being developed in the "back-of-town" areas away from the river, interspersed with the existing African-American neighborhoods.

Each ethnic group contributed to the very active musical environment in the city, and before the 20th century African-Americans masquerading as Indians during the Carnival season, and especially on Mardi Gras Day, began to appear in their neighborhoods. Their demonstrations included drumming and call-and-response chanting that was strongly reminiscent of West African and Caribbean music.

The operatic tradition, common to both New Orleans and areas of the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico, had an all-pervasive effect on the musical culture. New Orleans music was also impacted by the popular musical forms that proliferated throughout the United States following the Civil War, and marching bands expanded their already enormous popularity in the late 1880s. There was a growing national interest in syncopated musical styles influenced by African-American-inspired forms such as the cakewalk and minstrel tunes as well as the syncopated rhythms of Gypsy, Jewish, Celtic, Viennese, Mexican, and Cuban music. By the 1890s syncopated piano compositions, called ragtime, created a popular musical sensation, and brass bands began supplementing the standard march repertoire with syncopated "ragtime" marches.

A special collaborative relationship developed between brass bands in New Orleans and mutual aid and benevolent societies. While many organizations in New Orleans used brass bands in parades, concerts, political rallies, and funerals, African-Americans, in their own idiosyncratic manner, had their own expressive approach to funeral processions and parades that have the distinction of continuing to the present.

Over the last decade of the 19th century, groups such as downtown drummer and bandleader George "Papa Jack" Laine and his musicians

(some unable to read music) improvised musical arrangements and began drawing larger audiences for dances and parades. Uptown cornet player and bandleader Charles “Buddy” Bolden began incorporating improvised blues and began livening up the tempo of familiar dance tunes. Bolden was credited by many early jazz men as the first musician to have a distinctive new style. In the 1890s repressive segregation laws increased discrimination against anyone of African descent, which ultimately united many black and Creole of color musicians despite their differing styles and approaches to music.

The trend of combining improvisational musicians with polished music readers also occurred among Euro-American groups. Less formally trained Italians gradually began joining the ranks of highly trained German bands. Similarly, many white musicians, untrained in music and formerly associated with more formally trained Creoles of color, also began playing with Euro-American groups.

Most New Orleans events continued to be accompanied by music, and there were many opportunities for musicians to work. In addition to parades, bands played at dances, picnics, fish fries, political rallies, store openings, lawn parties, athletic events, church festivals, weddings, and funerals. Neighborhood social halls, some operated by mutual aid and benevolent societies or other civic organizations, frequently became the sites of banquets and dances. Consequently, sometime before 1900 African-American neighborhood organizations known as social aid and pleasure clubs began to spring up in the city. Similar in their neighborhood orientation to the mutual aid and benevolent societies, the purposes of social and pleasure clubs were to provide a social outlet for its members, provide community service, and parade as an expression of community pride. Such parading provided a dependable source of work for musicians and became an important training ground for young musical talent.

At the same time in many of the Euro-American working-class neighborhoods, marching clubs were formed, which replaced the benevolent societies as the groups moved into the social mainstream. The remaining groups of this type are



now most active immediately before and during the Carnival season and are, with a few exceptions, concentrated in the uptown riverfront neighborhoods.

New Orleans jazz began to spread to other cities as the city's musicians joined riverboat bands and vaudeville, minstrel, and other show tours. With the release in 1917 of the first commercial jazz recording by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, New Orleans style jazz became a national craze. Over the next decade the spreading popularity of jazz caused many musicians to move away from New Orleans. Yet ,New Orleans musicians and musical styles continued to influence jazz nationally as the music went through numerous stylistic changes. Jazz became the unchallenged popular music of America during the Swing era of the 1930s and 1940s. Later innovations, such as bebop in the 1940s and avant-garde in the 1960s, departed further from the New Orleans tradition. In the late 1930s, recognizing that early jazz had been neglected and deserved serious study, some jazz enthusiasts turned back to traditional jazz. This interest in traditional jazz continues to the present. In 1987 Congress designated jazz as a national treasure.

## **SOCIAL AID AND PLEASURE CLUBS / BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATIONS**

During the 19th century in the United States, many ethnic and emigrant groups formed mutual aid and benevolent societies to fulfill such functions as providing support to members during times of illness, accident, or death. In New Orleans, a special collaboration developed between brass bands and mutual aid and benevolent societies. Later social and pleasure clubs formed that fulfilled many of the same functions as the mutual aid and benevolent societies and provided a community service and a social outlet for its members. In addition to the funerals, these groups organized parades, which continue to the present to demonstrate neighborhood pride and solidarity. Each organization hires a brass band for parading and the quality of the music and band is a source of pride. Members of the organizations parade with the band while other neighborhood participants dance as “the second line” behind the official members and their contracted band. These traditions continue in New Orleans to the present and are living links to the city’s jazz heritage.

## **MARDI GRAS INDIANS**

The cultural groups known as Mardi Gras Indians formed in the late-19th century in the African-American communities. These groups parade on Mardi Gras Day and in March on St. Joseph’s Night and “Super Sundays,” wearing elaborate “hand-sewn” Indian costumes. They are accompanied by drummers, while the group members chant and dance.

Historically as one tribe encountered another violent confrontations could erupt, but these have been supplanted by competitive displays of dancing skill and the display of their stylized costumes. Today the Indians receive growing international recognition, and members often make appearances at various functions around New Orleans throughout the year. They continue to be a vibrant and living cultural influence, preserving African-American dance and music heritage.

These groups have contributed to the development of rhythm and blues, and their activities have long been intertwined with the parading tradition of the city. The Indians always participate in the second line at community parades, and second liners also follow the Indians in the parade.

## **THE JAZZ PARADE TRADITION**

The street parade tradition is over 100 years old and continues today. Mutual aid and benevolent societies still conduct funerals with jazz, and social and pleasure clubs regularly parade through neighborhoods with brass bands and accompanying second liners. Groups such as Doc Paulin's and the Algiers Brass Bands stick more closely to tradition, while others such as Rebirth and Treme Brass Bands use traditional and contemporary tunes infused with rhythm and blues, rock, hip-hop, and other modern influences. Even though parading occurs to a certain extent in many of the New Orleans neighborhoods, it seems to be concentrated in the Gerttown, Central City, Treme, Sixth Ward, and Seventh Ward neighborhoods. Presently there are more than 60 organizations that continue this tradition.

There are many neighborhood organizations that hold events related to New Orleans jazz, including the Treme Community Improvement Association. The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation sponsors community events, many with traditional jazz elements.

Funerals with jazz are an extension of the New Orleans’s parade tradition. From the 19th century on brass bands were hired to accompany the deceased to the cemetery. While en route the bands played somber, stately music. After dismissing the body, the bands play joyful, upbeat music as the mourners returned home.

## **HISTORICAL JAZZ COMMUNITIES**

A number of areas in New Orleans made significant contributions to jazz. In general, these areas can be categorized as historic commercial areas, historic downtown neighborhoods, historic uptown neighborhoods, and historic west bank

neighborhoods. As detailed in the 1993 *Special Resource Study*, the following have been recognized in each category.

**Historic Commercial Areas:** Storyville, Tango Belt, Back o' Town / South Rampart Street, Central Business District, and The Lakefront

**Historic Downtown Neighborhoods:** Tremé, Sixth Ward, Seventh Ward, Eighth Ward, and Ninth Ward

**Historic Uptown Neighborhoods:** Central City, Irish Channel, Jefferson City, Gerttown, Carrollton, and Black Pearl

**Historic West Bank Neighborhoods:** Algiers, Gretna, and Westwego

The role and contribution of these communities in jazz history will be elaborated on in subsequent research and interpretive documents.

### Historic Preservation

In accordance with the legislation establishing New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park, the National Park Service is committed to promoting the preservation and interpretation of the historic conditions reflecting the birth and evolution of jazz music. Under the *General Management Plan*, NPS efforts would focus on areas of technical assistance, including the creation of partnerships and working with other groups, to effect those objectives.

In the 1993 *Special Resource Study* the Park Service began to identify early jazz sites and structures in New Orleans. Documentation for the earliest sites and structures proved to be fragmentary at best. Few scholarly efforts have concentrated on the physical areas where jazz musicians lived and played, and published research has often focused on either the music or the personalities of the people involved in jazz. Also, much jazz history is of an anecdotal nature or written by uncritical devotees of the music. Nonetheless, the 1993 study made a concerted effort to gather, consolidate, and analyze the information. This effort included preparing an inventory of sites and structures in the New

Orleans area, as well as consulting existing written sources, the National Register of Historic Places, jazz experts, the general public, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Preservation of Jazz Advisory Commission. The process resulted in the compilation of 48 sites found in appendix D.

The National Park Service is using this list as a starting point to undertake a national historic landmark theme study focusing on early jazz sites in New Orleans. This study is required by the legislation that authorized New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park. The national historic landmark program is one way the federal government recognizes the national significance of properties. The Park Service conducts the landmarks program for the secretary of the interior, and it is an important aid to the preservation of outstanding historic places that are not in the national park system. Landmarks are nominated based on their study by cultural resources professionals. Nominations are then evaluated by the National Park System Advisory Board, a committee of scholars and interested citizens. The board recommends properties that should be designated by the secretary of the interior; decisions on designation, however, rest with the secretary.

Thus far, determinations of significance have been drafted for several jazz properties with owner concurrence, and the nomination process is continuing. Early jazz sites and structures are thus important and worthy of recognition and preservation in the context of their overall neighborhoods.

One area of special significance is South Rampart Street. This area, consisting of the 400 block of South Rampart Street, contains several historic properties. Two of them, Frank Douroux's "Little Gem" Saloon and Louis Karnofsky's store, date to the period of early jazz development. Two others have been determined to be of national significance to early New Orleans jazz. These are the Odd Fellows/Masonic Hall and the Iroquois Theater.

The Odd Fellows Hall was a community social hall often used by various musical groups during the formative period of New Orleans jazz (ca. 1900–1910). Located on the top story of a three-

story building, the hall was used by the band of the premier cornetist “Buddy” Bolden numerous times between 1896 and 1906. Bolden is acknowledged as one of the first and major innovators and practitioners of the improvisational music that coalesced into jazz. It was at Odd Fellows Hall, according to Bolden's biographer, “that his reputation was originally made.” Other groups and individuals played in the hall, including Frankie Dusen's Eagle Band (which succeeded Bolden's band), the versatile John “Papa John” Joseph; banjoist/guitarist Willie Foster; bass player Bob Lyons; and clarinetist Alphonse Picou.

However, it was the legendary Bolden, the so-called “First Man of Jazz,” whose association with the building gives it exceptional significance in the early history of jazz. Dances at the Odd Fellows Hall took place in what some attendees described as a “rough” atmosphere. In addition, during the 1917 to 1920 period the Odd Fellows Hall sponsored numerous parades that included jazz musicians. (Many musicians considered the corner of Rampart and Perdido, with the Odd Fellows Hall building and its integral Eagle Saloon, as their headquarters.) It is a principal site in the core area that witnessed the development of the spontaneously inventive form of music played with traditional six- or seven-piece bands headed by local luminaries, with Bolden a leader.

The Odd Fellows Hall is clearly, definitively, and outstandingly associated with the establishment of New Orleans jazz as a unique music that has contributed significantly to the broad patterns of American history and culture.

The two-story Iroquois Theater, an African-American vaudeville and motion picture house built in 1911, became a venue for the performance of jazz in New Orleans between 1912 and 1920, after which the building was used more exclusively as a motion picture theater until 1927, when it closed for good. The Iroquois' early period of use (ca. 1912–17) corresponded with the

evolution of jazz in New Orleans. The many performers who appeared on the Iroquois stage included blues and jazz vocalists and musicians, among them artists whose innovative music had evolved in adjacent neighborhoods during the 1890s and 1900s and whose appearances at the theater often marked a commercial beginning for their crafts. At the Iroquois, an interactive, participatory kind of experience between performers and audience existed that affected an expression of cultural values among the African-American community.

Performers at the Iroquois during its heyday included many of those who likewise played cabarets in the New Orleans sector known as Storyville. Individual acts included singers, comedians, pianists, and other musicians, such as Butler “String Beans” May; the Too Sweets; Wade, Johnson, and Winn; Willie Jackson; “Nooky” Johnson; Seals and Fisher; Charles Arrant; the Bruce Jazz Stock Company; Charles Ross; Louis “Two Bits” Scott; and Clarence Williams, some of whom later became prominent blues and jazz recording artists. In addition, some of the Iroquois' pit band members, including drummers Eddie “Rabbit” Robinson and Abbey “Chinee” Foster, later performed in important regional jazz bands.

While the Iroquois is locally important in the areas of entertainment, ethnic heritage, performing arts, and social history, it is likewise significant in the context of the evolution of New Orleans Jazz during the early decades of the 20th century. Activities at the Iroquois represent the building's associations with events significant to the traditions of the New Orleans community.

Because New Orleans Jazz became a national phenomenon during the period that followed, the Iroquois, as a promotional and commercial vehicle for early jazz, outstandingly represents the evolving form of a music that became popular throughout the nation and is nationally significant in the context of jazz history.

South Rampart Street Area



**SOUTH RAMPART STREET AREA**  
 New Orleans Jazz National Histor  
 U.S. Department of the Interior National Park  
 DSC MAY 98 493 20010

# TOURISM

The city of New Orleans is one of the premier tourist destination cities in the nation. It has developed as an outstanding convention locale, bringing national and international visitors into the downtown area on a year-round basis. The city and tourist industry offer all types of public transportation, such as city and tour buses, streetcars, shuttles, cabs, ferries, tour and casino boats, all of which are easily accessible and readily available. The international airport provides cabs and shuttles into the city proper.

The Vieux Carré, with its old world charm, antique shops, restaurants, and nightclubs is the hub of the tourist industry. It is bordered on the south by Canal Street, the mecca of downtown retail shopping; on the east by the tree-lined riverfront with its boats, boardwalk, shops, aquarium; on the north by the historic French Market and the Old U.S. Mint along Esplanade Avenue; and on the west by North Rampart Street, adjacent to Louis Armstrong Park. The streets in and around this area are crowded year round with business people and tourists who use all of the available transportation getting to and from work, hotels, motels, and various attractions. The city is crisscrossed with public and tourist transportation systems.

## ACCESS

New Orleans is easily accessed by visitors. The city is a major transportation hub and the leading seaport in the United States. It is on the intracoastal waterway system and is a major trade link to Latin America and other regions of the world. Seaport facilities are connected to the rest of the country by the Mississippi River, six mainline railroads, three interstate highways, and an extensive roadway network. The New Orleans International Airport provides commercial air service to major U.S. cities and many foreign countries. Based upon 1990 U.S. census data, the city is within 500 miles of 15.6% of the U.S. population (approximately 39 million people).

## TRANSPORTATION IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA

The Algiers Ferry travels from the foot of Canal Street across the Mississippi River to the city of Algiers. This ferry is a car transport used primarily by business people who live in Algiers and work in New Orleans. There is no charge to pedestrians, and it is a pleasant opportunity to experience the Mississippi and get a commanding view of the both sides of the river. Many commercial boat tours, as well as casino paddle-wheelers, are available along the riverfront. The public bus system offered by the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) provides transportation to all parts of the city, from the Vieux Carré to City Park to the Audubon Zoo to Lake Ponchartrain. The St. Charles Avenue streetcar, one of the oldest in the nation, travels from Canal Street along St. Charles Avenue to Carrollton Avenue, passing the Garden District with its impressive homes, two universities, and the Audubon Zoo. The Vieux Carré Shuttle circulates broadly in and around the Canal Street business area and throughout the Vieux Carré stopping at many of the city's sites. The Riverfront Streetcar runs along the riverfront from the convention center to the Old U.S. Mint.

## Maps and Brochures

Many publications are available to assist visitors in planning their activities. There is an array of pamphlets, brochures, and magazines available at the city's information office located on St. Anne Street in the Vieux Carré as well as at hotels, motels, and virtually all businesses. These provide tourists with information on what to see and where to go in the city. The magazine *Where* has excellent maps detailing transportation options and highlighting the city's sites. Several guidebooks are available to introduce visitors to the African-American heritage of the city. Guidebooks and maps are available that showcase African-American contributions to the city's development. There is

also a tourist and entertainment television channel that provides information about the streetcars and the city.

### **Jazz Information**

Information on jazz-related activities, tours, and sites is available in several publications, such as the *Times Picayune's Lagniappe*, *Gambit*, *Offbeat*, *Afro News*, *Aware Magazine*, *Where Magazine*, *Data News*, *Louisiana Weekly*, *Arrive Magazine*, and radio announcements on WWOZ (the premier jazz radio station). These publications are readily available at newsstands, in most tourist shops, and in motel/hotel rooms. Jazz performance schedules are also available on various World Wide Web sites.

### **TOURS**

#### **Jazz Walking Tours**

Several commercial tour groups offer packages that include stops at jazz sites. Because many of the existing jazz sites are scattered throughout the city, it is difficult to organize comprehensive walking tours. However, several prime jazz sites lie within walking distance of the Vieux Carré, making possible walking tours to musicians' homes, neighborhoods, or to theaters, publishing companies, or former dance halls. Brochures being developed by the New Orleans Jazz Commission should make walking tours more accessible to tourists.

#### **Jazz Auto Tours**

Self-guided tours, in the form of maps and brochures, have been published and are available to the public. Guided bus tours, such as those provided by the Louis Armstrong Foundation, offer additional opportunities for visiting jazz sites. Other bus tours, while not focusing exclusively on jazz sites, include some jazz locations on their itineraries. Auto-tour maps being developed by the New Orleans Jazz

Commission should make touring jazz sites in private vehicles easier.

### **JAZZ MUSIC**

Music happens everywhere in the city. There are street-corner musicians, city-sponsored events, school concerts, the famous Bourbon street bars and saloons, and paddle-wheel cruises. Yet, most traditional jazz experts will confess that the city offers "real" jazz in but a few locations. The most publicized locations for traditional jazz are located in the Vieux Carré and the Marigny Triangle. There are also a number of smaller neighborhood establishments, however, that offer traditional jazz. These places are generally less ostentatious and more neighborly in atmosphere and are known by word of mouth.

Traditional jazz, which is frequently found in smaller, more remote venues, is advertised in the jazz publications mentioned above. Because most visitors to the city are unfamiliar with different areas, there is often a reluctance for them to venture beyond the established tourist area.

In the past many outdoor performances have been held by a variety of organizations that have facilities available to provide this type of organized activity. The Old U.S. Mint, for example, offered a series of performances monthly on Saturday afternoons. The Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve's French Quarter unit has presented several jazz activities over the past several years. The New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park offered free Saturday afternoon jazz concerts in Armstrong Park during the summers of 1997 and 1998, and the city and the school systems have organized concerts and student participation opportunities. Further, the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival has become an increasingly popular annual event.

# VISITOR USE

## VISITOR USE OF THE PARK

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park was recently established and does not yet encompass any land, buildings, or facilities. Since the park's creation, a superintendent has been hired and staff positions are beginning to be identified and staffed as funding becomes available. As with any newly created but undeveloped unit of the national park system, there is not yet a history of visitor use.

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park is a nontraditional park in that its legislated mission extends beyond any physical boundaries. The official boundaries of this cultural park have not yet been determined. This planning effort will help establish the location of park facilities and boundaries. Congress has authorized the National Park Service to acquire and develop an interpretive visitor center complex as part of the park. Such a center would serve as the primary locus from which park programs would emanate. Other sites could be designated as part of the park if they are found to be suitable and feasible for acquisition, and they further the purposes of the park. Still other sites could become associated with the park by virtue of cooperative agreements. However, a large part of the park's mission will involve technical assistance and jazz educational programs that will occur outside the park's officially designated boundaries.

Since facilities and programs have not yet been developed, visitor use of the park has yet to be tabulated. Once the park is ready to receive visitors, official recording procedures will be established and the park will begin to record visitor use.

Overnight use will not be counted or reported for this park. Providing for overnight accommodations is neither within the scope of the park nor necessary given the extensive lodging services available from the private sector in the New Orleans region.

## PARK VISITOR FACILITIES

Possible locations for visitor centers include Louis Armstrong Park and the Old U.S. Mint.

### Louis Armstrong Park

This park officially opened in 1980, though work on it began in the 1960s. The park encompasses the Municipal Auditorium, Congo Square, and structures from the Treme Community. Congo Square has served as a gathering place for the New Orleans African-American community for more than 200 years. To create the park and setting for a theater of the performing arts, Treme residences and businesses, including early jazz halls, were demolished. The original plan was to keep Perseverance Hall No. 4, the pumping station, and the fire house (constructed in the 1940s) while most of the other structures in the nearly 32 acres area would be removed. As time passed the city decided to preserve the Caretaker's House (built in 1830 for Perseverance Hall No. 4), Rabassa House (moved from its original location at 1125 St. Ann Street), and the Reimann House (moved from its original location at 618 S. Gayoso). These buildings were grouped together to define a courtyard linked by a two-story arcade and elevator tower.

Two of these structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They are Perseverance Hall No. 4 and the Jean Louis Rabassa House. Both are listed as being locally significant for architecture. The Rabassa House was constructed between 1825 to 1833 and is locally significant as a raised cottage structure. It is one of the few surviving structures of this type in New Orleans. The Rabassa House was relocated to Louis Armstrong Park from Treme.

Perseverance Hall No. 4 was a white-built and managed Masonic lodge erected between 1819 and 1820. It is the oldest Masonic temple in Louisiana and is significant in the areas of religion, philosophy, and Masonic historic places. Its associative significance to the evolution of New

Orleans jazz appears to be marginal and is based on its use for dances, where black jazz performers and bands reportedly played for black or white audiences. Although the building was used for social functions such as weddings and balls where jazz musicians performed, these uses have only been occasionally documented, perhaps because many pertinent Masonic records have been destroyed. Furthermore, confusion often exists over whether historical references pertain to this building or to Perseverance Hall on Villere Street. During the early 1900s some bands, such as the Golden Rule Band, were barred from appearing at Perseverance Hall No. 4, apparently because management considered them too undignified for the place. Various organizations, both black and white, rented Perseverance Hall No. 4 for dances, concerts, Monday night banquets, and recitals. The building also served as a terminal point for Labor Day parades involving white and black bands. During the 1920s and 1930s, well past the formative years of jazz, various jazz bands played there.

### **Old U.S. Mint, New Orleans Branch**

This structure is a national historic landmark and is significant in the areas of architecture, commerce, military, and urban planning, according to the National Register of Historic Places. It is located at 420 Esplanade Avenue and presently contains part of the Louisiana State Museum. It houses the New Orleans Jazz Club Collection and has a wing of exhibits dedicated to the jazz story. The Mint is a large three-story building constructed in 1835. During the Civil War, it was taken over and briefly used by Confederate forces to mint coins. It served as a mint until 1909, when it was converted into a federal prison. Later it served as a Coast Guard receiving station during World War II. In 1966 the building was transferred by the federal government to the state of Louisiana for preservation as a historic landmark. The Louisiana State Museum was designated as the state agency responsible for the building's administration, maintenance, preservation, and restoration. The state of Louisiana has renovated the building to serve museum purposes.

### **VISITOR EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES**

Principal activities offered by the park consist of orientation to the park at the visitor center, viewing interpretive displays, exhibits, and historical artifacts, and experiencing recorded and live jazz performances and demonstrations. The public occasionally has opportunities to talk to and interact with performing artists and musicians. A broad range of jazz-related educational activities and interpretive outreach programs are provided in the environs of New Orleans. As funding permits, the National Park Service endeavors to provide complementary activities, experiences, programs, services, and technical assistance to the already ongoing jazz-oriented educational and preservation efforts of numerous individuals, institutions, and entities already working to preserve and promote jazz music as an important and unique part of American culture.

### **VISITATION**

New Orleans is an important destination city for many visitors. Mardi Gras, the Vieux Carré, the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, other special events, sporting events, concerts, and food all attract visitors to the city.

The New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation participated in the 1990 Travel USA Benchmark survey. This was the largest and most comprehensive study of the American leisure traveler ever completed. The study was updated for New Orleans in 1992, resulting in the following information regarding the city's tourism:

- New Orleans was found to have a superb image that attracts upscale consumers from across the nation.
- New Orleans is considered the most unique and exciting city in North America in the mind of the traveling public.
- In 1992 an estimated 6.5 million overnight visitors 18+ years of age came to New Orleans.

- An additional 1.1 million visitors spent time in New Orleans but did not stay overnight, while 400,000 overnight visitors to Louisiana passed through the city.
- Direct tourism expenditures in New Orleans amounted to \$1.8 billion in 1992.
- New Orleans expenditures are broken out as follows

Local transportation	\$203 million
Accommodations	\$493 million
Food	\$504 million
Retail	\$479 million
Recreation/Sightseeing/ Entertainment	\$148 million

These facts indicate that the city has an excellent image as a visitor attraction, over 7.5 million individuals visited the city in 1992, and over \$1.8 billion was spent in New Orleans by tourists in 1992.

The implications for the New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park are that tourism, already an important and thriving sector of the local economy, continues to rise, and thus, there is a large and ever-increasing pool of visitors to the city that potentially could visit the park.

Once the park is ready to receive visitors at its visitor center and other sites, and once outreach and jazz educational and interpretive programs are implemented, procedures would be established that would allow the park staff to record and report public use. Until then there would not be any comprehensive visitor use data available for the park. However, based on the above data, it can be reasonably assumed that the park will receive substantial numbers of visitors. This assumption is realistic because New Orleans is internationally known for its jazz music, jazz performers, and jazz heritage and is a major tourist and convention destination. Moreover the area is the primary tourist destination in Louisiana and receives millions of visitors each year.

It is impossible at this time to accurately predict how many persons may visit the park or may

experience park programs annually. Yet, an examination of visitor use at a number of attractions in the New Orleans area provides some insight into the volume of public use that the park may receive. The Vieux Carré is one of the oldest and most popular sections of New Orleans and a major tourist attraction. It retains a rich heritage of jazz music as well as an active connection with jazz. Besides the music being played in commercial jazz nightclubs, at Preservation Jazz Hall, and on the streets themselves, the Louisiana State Museum maintains exhibits telling the story of jazz at its Old U.S. Mint facility located at the end of the French Market. A small fee is charged for entrance to this museum and accurate visitor use figures are maintained (see table 8).

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve's Vieux Carré Visitor Center introduces the public to the Vieux Carré and to the other units of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve (table 10). Even though this contact point does not have a high profile, significant numbers of visitors are served from the facility. These attractions hint of the potential appeal that a visitor center for New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park might have if located within or near the Vieux Carré. Expected visitor use of New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park could range from 45,000 to 60,000 or more persons annually during its first years of operation.

**TABLE 9: ANNUAL VISITATION, LOUISIANA STATE MUSEUM, OLD U.S. MINT UNIT**

Year	Visitation
1997	50,301
1996	49,621
1995	46,840
1994	49,442
1993	54,353
1992	44,853
1991	36,543
1990	39,567
1989	39,098
1988	29,494
1987	20,290
1986	26,570

Source: Louisiana State Museum

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park would not count or report overnight stays because the park does not provide overnight accommodations. In a large city such as New Orleans there is no need for the National Park Service to provide lodging services. The private sector provides these, and there are currently more than 20,000 rooms in Orleans

Source: National Park Service, Public Use Statistics Program Center (PSPC).

Recreation visits are the entries of persons, for any part of a day, onto lands or waters administered by the NPS for recreation purposes.

Parish available for the touring public. An additional 6,300 rooms are available in adjoining Jefferson and St. Bernard parishes. Except for events such as Mardi Gras and Jazz Fest, the area's hotels and motels have excess capacity; the average occupancy rates have been a little over 70% for the period 1991 to 1995.

**Visitor Profile for New Orleans**

Obviously, a visitor profile cannot be developed for visitors to a park that does not yet have a history of use. Yet, much is already known about visitors to the New Orleans area. In 1994 the New Orleans Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc., initiated a visitor survey to collect information about New Orleans visitors. Data on age, occupation, education, and income obtained from the survey respondents are presented below (tables 11–13). While the visitor profile for typical New Orleans visitors may not be the same as that for the park, the visitors represented by this survey would reflect the population from which visitors to New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park would be drawn.

**TABLE 10: JEAN LAFITTE HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE, VIEUX CARRÉ VISITOR CENTER**

Year	Recreation Visits
1997	57,771
1996	62,950
1995	58,737
1994	63,020
1993	87,147

**TABLE 11: DISTRIBUTION OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY AGE**

Age Bracket	Percent of Total Respondents
21–30 years	21%
31–40 years	24%
41–50 years	25%
51–60 years	17%
61–70 years	10%
over 70 years	3%
Total	100%

Source: New Orleans Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc., Visitor Profile Study, 1994.

Regarding the visitor profile for the New Orleans tourist, respondents indicated that 68% were married or living with a partner, 26% were single, and the remaining 6% were either divorced, widowed, or separated. Most respondents (63%) did not have children at home, while 37% lived in homes with children. However, only 16% of the groups surveyed were traveling with children. The average age of the respondents was early 40s, and the majority held positions in managerial or professional occupations. More than one-half were college graduates and their household income was estimated to be in the low \$60,000s. Ethnically/racially, the respondents to the survey were overwhelmingly Caucasian (88%), while people of African-American, Asian, and Hispanic descent made up 7%, 2%, and 1% of the total, respectively. Previous research had described visitors to New Orleans as upscale in terms of income, education, and occupation, and this study concluded the same.

**TABLE 12: DISTRIBUTION OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY OCCUPATION**

Occupation	Percent of Total Respondents
Professional/ Managerial	47%
Retired	12%
Technical/ Administrative	12%
Sales or Service	9%
Unclassified	8%
Students	7%
Homemakers	3%
Military	1%
Unemployed	1%
Total	100%

Source: New Orleans Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc., Visitor Profile Study, 1994.

**TABLE 13: DISTRIBUTION OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY EDUCATION**

Education	Percent of Total Respondents
Post-Graduate	28%
College Graduate	30%
Some College	26%
High School	14%
Some High School or less	2%
Total	100%

Source: New Orleans Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc., Visitor Profile Study, 1994.

The survey reported that the average (mean) party size visiting New Orleans was composed of 3.6 people, although the most frequent (mode) group size was of two people. The median size was also of two people. The study noted that many respondents were traveling with large groups, and this probably led to the larger mean party size. The sample was about evenly split between first-time visitors and repeat visitors. Vacations and conventions were the two most frequently given reasons for visitation (table 15). Most visitors were in town for more than one day (92%), the rest for just one day. For those in the sample that stayed overnight, the average length of stay was 4.4 nights (the mode was three nights and the median was four nights).

The Vieux Carré was very popular with visitors, with 87% of the survey respondents having visited this part of town. Respondents stated that they intended to visit the riverfront (90% of the sample), Jackson Square (90%), and the aquarium (37%) as part of their trip.

Almost all respondents were satisfied (83% of the sample) or somewhat satisfied (16%) with their New Orleans experience. Only 1% of the respondents were very dissatisfied with their visit. The major complaints noted in the study were (1) the city is dirty, (2) everything is so expensive (e.g., restaurants, hotels, parking, attractions), (3) the street people make New

Orleans unattractive (visitors additionally fear for their personal safety around these people, and the beggars are aggressive), and (4) safety concerns and crime were frequent issues.

Visitor origins were also identified in the survey. Respondents came for a variety of states and several foreign countries. Visitors with domestic origins came from Texas (11% of respondents), Florida (9%), California (7%), Louisiana (7%), and New York (5%). Fourteen other states were represented in the sample by between 2% and 14% of respondents. The foreign visitors came from the United Kingdom (16% of foreign visitors sampled), Germany (15%), Canada (13%), and Australia (10%). Eleven other countries were represented in the sample by between 2% and 5% percent of the foreign visitors sampled. These results suggest the city has a wide national and international appeal as a tourist destination.

The implications for management of New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park are that the typical tourist visiting New Orleans is also likely to be the typical visitor to the park. That is, out-of-town visitors to the park would tend to be upscale in terms of income, education, occupation, and would be traveling without children for the purpose of a vacation. This would be one segment of the park visitor population that would be atypical of the general visitor population to national parks (i.e., middle-class and working-class families traveling with children). Although the New Orleans tourist is also likely to be a New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park visitor, this is not the only segment of the visitor population that is important to the success of the park. The traditional and typical national park visitor, as well as the local population, including school groups, will also constitute important audiences for the park’s programs and interpretive messages.

**TABLE 14: DISTRIBUTION OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY INCOME**

Income Range	Percent of Total Respondents
under \$25,000	12%
\$25,000 to \$39,000	15%
\$40,000 to \$54,000	20%
\$55,000 to \$74,000	21%
\$75,000 to \$149,000	18%
Over \$150,000	6%
no response	8%
Total	100%

Source: New Orleans Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc., Visitor Profile Study, 1994.

**TABLE 15: DISTRIBUTION OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY REASON FOR THE VISIT**

Reason for the Visit	Percent of Total Respondents
Vacation	62%
Convention	15%
Visiting Friends/Relatives	5%
Other Reason	5%
Other Business Trip	4%
Special Event	4%
Corporate Meeting	2%
Sporting Event	2%
Gamble	1%
Total	100%

Source: New Orleans Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc., Visitor Profile Study, 1994.

## SOCIOECONOMIC AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

### REGIONAL ECONOMIC BASE

New Orleans is located between Lake Ponchartrain and the Mississippi River in southeast Louisiana in the center of the Gulf South region of the United States. It is a major port of national and international trade. Available natural resources, good transportation access, and an available labor force contribute to a strong and diversified economic base for the New Orleans Region.<sup>5</sup> Earnings in 1995 for Orleans Parish amounted to \$10.2 billion, or approximately 18.2% of the total earnings for Louisiana (table 16). During this same time frame, the six-parish New Orleans Metropolitan Statistical Area accounted for 36.4% of the state's total earnings.

Top economic sectors in terms of earnings are identified in table 16. Tourism as a specific economic industry contains categories that are included in the major divisions of services and retail trade. As a sector by itself, tourism accounted for 7.3% of total earnings in 1994 (according to the Metrovision Research Department). As such, tourism plays an important part in the area's economy. Tourism in the New Orleans region has doubled in the last 20 years, and it is expected to continue to grow. Visitation in the greater New Orleans area grew by more than 1.5 million persons in a recent five-year time frame (table 17). It is estimated that visitors spent almost \$3.5 billion in the New Orleans region in 1994. Visitor expenditures from 1988 to 1994 have increased by more than \$1 billion, a 45.5% increase (table 18).

### POPULATION

In 1995 the New Orleans Metropolitan Statistical Area had a population of more than

1.3 million persons. This area has remained fairly stable since 1980 (table 19). Orleans Parish (containing the city of New Orleans) has experienced a decline of 13.3% in population over this same time period. Recent data show that a slight decline in population from year to year is a continuing pattern. In spite of this trend, Orleans Parish was the most populated parish in the state of Louisiana in 1995. It is one of 64 parishes in Louisiana and contains approximately 11.2% of the state's population.

### ECONOMY

In 1995 Orleans Parish had a per capita personal income of \$21,874, which ranked fourth in the state at 115.1% of the state average. However, the state per capita personal income was only 81.9% of the national average. So while being relatively well off within the state, the parish was slightly below the national average per capita personal income.

Job growth was a positive 6.47% between the period 1990 and September, 1995. Table 21 shows the job growth for the region and the accompanying unemployment rates. Overall unemployment in the region was comparable to the state and national averages. However, in Orleans Parish unemployment was higher than the state and national averages in 1990 and somewhat higher in 1994 (see table 22). Table 22 also points out that in terms of the persons living below the official poverty level in 1990 and 1993, Orleans Parish (at 31.6% and 37.9%) was considerably worse off than either the state or nation.

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5. The New Orleans Region includes the nine parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. James, St. Tammany, Plaquemines, and Tangipahoa. Except for Tangipahoa Parish, which is not included, these make up the New Orleans Metropolitan Statistical Area.

**TABLE 16: TOP THREE INDUSTRIES IN 1995 IN TERMS OF EARNINGS**

Primary Economic Sectors in Terms of Earnings in 1995				
State/Parish* MSA	Industry and Percent of Total Earnings	Industry and Percent of Total Earnings	Industry and Percent of Total Earnings	Total Earnings (Thousands of \$)
Louisiana	Services (27.3%)	State and Local Government (13.4%)	Retail Trade (9.5%)	\$56,287,608
Orleans	Services (37.8%)	State and Local Government (11.7%)	Transportation and Utilities (9.3%)	\$10,235,108
New Orleans, LA MSA*	Services (32.7%)	State and Local Government (11.0%)	Retail Trade (9.6%)	\$20,467,748

Source: Regional Economic Information System, 1969-95, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1994 data.

\*New Orleans, Louisiana Metropolitan Statistical Area consists of the following parishes: Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany.

**TABLE 17: VISITORS TO THE NEW ORLEANS AREA BY YEAR**

Year	Visitors to New Orleans Area
1989	9,299,000
1990	8,401,000
1991	7,800,000
1992	9,532,000
1993	9,707,000
1994	10,850,000

Source: New Orleans Region, Advantages and Opportunities for Business Investment, Metrovision Partnership for Economic Development, 1995. Research Department, Metrovision; and U.S. Travel Data Center.

**TABLE 18: GROWTH OF NEW ORLEANS VISITOR EXPENDITURES BY YEAR**

Year	Visitor Expenditures
1988	\$2,371,770,000
1989	\$2,521,170,000
1990	\$2,745,370,000
1991	\$2,793,890,000
1992	\$2,985,370,000
1993	\$3,086,670,000
1994	\$3,450,140,000

Source: New Orleans Region, Advantages and Opportunities for Business Investment, Metrovision Partnership for Economic Development, 1995 and U.S. Travel Data Center.

**TABLE 19: POPULATION FOR SELECTED YEARS**

<b>POPULATION DATA FOR SELECTED YEARS</b>				
Political Unit	1980	1990	1995	Percentage Change, 1980–1994
USA	227,224,719	249,397,990	260,889,634	15.7%
Louisiana	4,223,101	4,217,362	4,338,072	2.7%
Orleans	558,557	495,036	484,290	-13.3%
New Orleans MSA*	1,308,411	1,284,037	1,314,167	0.4%

Source: Regional Economic Information System, 1994–95, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1994 data.

\*New Orleans, Louisiana Metropolitan Statistical Area consists of the following parishes: Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany.

**TABLE 20: PER CAPITA PERSONAL INCOME FOR SELECTED YEARS**

U.S./State/MSA /Parish	1980	1990	1995
U.S.	\$10,030	\$19,142	\$23,196
Louisiana	\$8,768	\$14,761	\$18,997
New Orleans MSA*	\$9,871	\$16,992	\$21,374
Orleans	\$9,633	\$16,886	\$21,874

Source: Regional Economic Information System, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1994 data.

\*New Orleans, Louisiana Metropolitan Statistical Area consists of the following parishes: Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany.

**TABLE 21: CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT**

YEAR	CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE (NEW ORLEANS NINE PARISH REGION)	PERCENT UNEMPLOYED		
		NEW ORLEANS NINE PARISH REGION	LOUISIANA	U.S.
1995	613,000	6.7%	na	na
1994	601,000	7.4%	8.0%	6.1%
1993	587,300	6.8%	7.4%	6.8%
1992	604,700	6.9%	8.1%	7.4%
1991	605,000	6.0%	7.1%	6.7%
1990	589,000	5.6%	6.2%	5.5%

Source: New Orleans Region, Advantages and Opportunities for Business Investment, Metrovision Partnership for Economic Development, 1995, and the Louisiana Department of Labor.

**TABLE 22: UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY**

POLITICAL UNIT	PERCENTAGE OF LABOR FORCE UNEMPLOYED, 1990	PERCENTAGE OF LABOR FORCE UNEMPLOYED, 1994	PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION BELOW POVERTY LEVEL, 1990	PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION BELOW POVERTY LEVEL, 1994
USA	6.2%	6.1%	13.1%	15.1%
Louisiana	9.0%	8.0%	23.6%	23.9%
Orleans Parish	12.7%	8.1%	31.6%	37.9%

## NATURAL RESOURCES

The area of New Orleans that includes many of the properties and much of the history relating to New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park has been urban for nearly 300 years, and its natural environment has been greatly altered. New Orleans is part of the Coastal Marsh physiographic region, which includes the lowest elevations in the state. Originally, much of the New Orleans area required the construction and continued maintenance of levees and canals to permit construction of homes and buildings in this part of the lower Mississippi River valley.

### AIR QUALITY

Orleans Parish is currently meeting all national ambient emissions quality standards affecting air quality and pollution for sulfur dioxide, ozone, particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, carbon dioxide, and lead.

### THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

The following federally listed endangered animal species have been recorded in Orleans Parish: Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), West Indian Manatee (*Trichechus manatus*), Gulf Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*), and Pallid Sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus albus*). In addition to these, the state of Louisiana lists the following animals as rare, threatened, and endangered in Orleans Parish: Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), Big Brown Bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*), Diamondback Terrapin (*Malaclemys terrapin*), and Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*). No critical habitat is known to occur in the park area. There are no species of plants in the park area that are federally listed or proposed for listing as endangered or threatened.

### FLOODPLAINS

The entire delta region including New Orleans lies within the natural floodplain of the Mississippi River and adjacent waterways. Federal Emergency Management Agency

(FEMA) floodplain boundary maps revised in 1984 show that the entire city area is inside the boundaries of the 100- and 500-year floodplain. Riverine flooding and flooding caused by tidal changes is checked by the presence of levees and canals. Any flooding that is likely to occur in the park area would probably be due to heavy rainfall or levee damage.

### CLIMATE

New Orleans has a humid, subtropical climate that is characterized by short, mild winters and relatively long, hot summers. Winds from the Gulf of Mexico bring warm, moist air causing copious rainfall. Incursions of cold air are relatively rare and generally do not last longer than several days. Annual rainfall averages 58 inches, most of which occurs during the months of July through September. The driest months are October and November. Average daily winter temperatures range from 47° F to 66° F, with January and February being the coldest months of the year. Summer temperatures range from 72° F to 89° F and rarely exceed 100° F, with July and August the warmest months of the year.

### WATER QUALITY

Water quality in the city exceeds the standards of the Environmental Protection Agency. New Orleans adjoins several water bodies whose presence physically and perpetually impacts the park area. They consist of (1) the Mississippi River, which receives heavy industrial discharges from cities upstream, as well as from New Orleans, transports them through the birdfoot delta, and deposits them into the Gulf of Mexico; (2) Lake Pontchartrain, a large estuarine lake, and (3) Bayou St. John, a scenic watercourse that flows from New Orleans to Lake Ponchartrain. Both of the latter bodies contain elements of pollution associated with urban occupation and development.

## **SOILS**

The soils in New Orleans developed as a result of alluvial and marine sedimentation simultaneous with the accumulation of organic material. Urban growth in New Orleans evolved over several centuries on a foundation of organic and fluid mineral soils that are characterized by flooding, chronic wetness, and subsidence. According to Soil Conservation Service surveys of Orleans and Jefferson parishes, the soils that predominate in the area encompassing

metropolitan New Orleans generally represent poorly drained and firm clayey mineral soil known as Sharkey silty clay loam, Sharkey clay, Commerce silt loam, Commerce silty clay loam, and Harlahan clay. Much of the city's downtown area consists of urban land where more than 85% of the surface is covered by asphalt, concrete, buildings, or other impervious surfaces. Most of this development is located on the natural levees of the Mississippi River.